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## SOME POINTS IN THE LITERARY STUDY OF VIRGIL<sup>1</sup>

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In his preface to the third edition of the third volume of Conington's Virgil, Nettleship wrote (1883): "Professor Sellar's elaborate study of Virgil is addressed to a literary rather than to a philological public." This distinction between the literary and the philological study of the classics has been asserted repeatedly since that time, in terms, by editors and critics, or has been tacitly taken for granted. Side by side with the belief in this distinction another belief has taken root, that the literary study of the classics can be best advanced, or at least materially furthered, by the inclusion in our commentaries on the classic authors or in our classroom instruction of passages from modern literatures.

I purpose, first of all, to protest against this tendency to make a distinction between the philological and the literary study of the classics, and then to ask whether the inclusion in a printed book or in classroom teaching of quotations from modern literatures, or even from the classic authors themselves, really makes for a literary interpretation and appreciation of the classics.

What I have to say on the first point seems, to me at least, in reality of the nature of a truism. If by the term "philology," as applied to a method of studying the works of a given Latin poet, we mean a minute consideration of his vocabulary, his grouping of words, his syntax, his metrical practices, it goes without saying that the philological study of an author is the basis of all study of an author.<sup>2</sup>

As has been well said: "Words are the sole element of all literary

<sup>1</sup> Read at the Classical Conference at Ann Arbor, Mich., March 30, 1905.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Nettleship, *loc. cit.*: "That a wider interest attaches to the literary than to the philological aspect of the classics is obvious; yet without the basis laid by philological criticism a literary appreciation, however good, is apt to become vague, unhistorical, and amateurish. I must plead this fact as my justification, if justification be needed, for attempting to advance this commentary in the direction of thoroughness and precision."

expression; upon their weight and color depend all possible literary effects." It follows that no study of Latin words can be too minute. He who masters Latin words most thoroughly will, other things being equal, be the best qualified to reach a correct literary appreciation of Latin authors, particularly of poets like Virgil and Horace.<sup>1</sup>

Words are, however, not used singly; they are combined into phrases, clauses, and sentences. At this point considerations of syntax and word-order enter. Yet in some way many students come to college with the strange notion that the study of grammar is utterly incompatible with the literary study of the classic poets. Yet it is so obviously true that one is ashamed to state it in this company that without a knowledge of syntax no interpretation at all of the classics is possible, whereas the keener and more incisive, the more automatic and instinctive is one's interpretation of the syntax

<sup>1</sup> I cannot forbear to quote one example of the results still to be won by an intensive study of Latin words. In *Aeneid*, VI, 298, 326, Charon is called *portitor*. American editions of Virgil are, I think, a unit in defining *portitor* simply as "ferryman," "boatman," "carrier." Lewis and Short and Georges recognize two words spelled *portitor*: one they connect with *portus*, citing it only from Plautus, Terence, and Cicero; the other they derive from *porto*, citing it first from Virgil and Propertius. No attempt is made to explain why the latter word took the form *portitor* rather than *portator*.

Now, down through Cicero in every passage which shows a word *portitor* the meaning "port-warden," "custom-house officer," is absolutely demanded. Lexicographical comments in Donatus on Terence, Tiberius Donatus on Virgil, and Nonius point the same way. Nonius' note is especially clear: "Portitores dicuntur teleonarii, qui portum obsidentes omnia sciscitantur, ut ex eo vectigal accipiant." A word *portitor* occurs next in *Georgics*, IV, 502, in the description of the underworld. (Virgil had his eyes on this passage while he was writing the longer description of Hades in *Aeneid*, VI.) Orpheus has turned around to see if Eurydice is following; she vanishes from his sight, and he seeks her in vain: "Nec *portitor* Orci Amplius obiectam passus transire paludem." Here, certainly, Charon is the warder of the river of the underworld, an inspector, so to say, set to scrutinize all comers and to bar out those who have no right to cross, as the customs officer is set to bar forbidden goods from passage through town or country. *Aeneid*, VI, 298, 326, are precisely similar. What attracted *Aeneas*' attention was the difference made by Charon in accepting some *umbrae* for passage and rejecting others; cf. 319, 320 with 315, 316. Charon's primary functions, then, are those of a warder, inspector; his functions as ferryman are secondary. It was the misunderstanding of the Virgilian passages and the placing of the stress on the less important part of Charon's functions that led later Latin writers and modern critics alike to define *portitor* here by "ferryman" rather than by "warder" or the like. Georges and Lewis and Short, then, should be corrected; there is but one word *portitor* (cf. *portus*). See Norden on *Aeneid*, VI, 298, to whose suggestive discussion this note owes its origin.

of a Latin poet, and the slighter, by consequence, the barrier between himself and the author, the better prepared is he to understand and enjoy the Latin poets as literature. Knowledge of forms, mastery of syntax, control of vocabulary, are the tools by which we are to do our work in the classics; it behooves us, therefore, if we would be skilful and effective workmen, to make these tools as keen and serviceable as possible.

In addition to the general problems presented by the grouping of words, as determined by the great fundamental laws of the language, the laws of syntax, the student of a Latin poet finds himself confronted by certain special problems, due in part to the poet's own temperament, in part to the limitations imposed upon him by the metrical form. Virgil, for example, is fond of phrases which are inversions of those current in ordinary speech or writing. Here absolute mastery of the normal types of expression is the best equipment for the would-be interpreter of Virgil. Stress has often been laid on the suggestiveness of Virgil's language; that is to say, it has been argued that Virgil frequently employs phrases which shall suggest to his readers two or more sets of ideas, so that the reader is often at a loss to determine which meaning he should emphasize in his interpretation.<sup>1</sup> If this view is not misguided, it is clear that Virgil's language requires especial study. It is equally clear, to me at least, that the practice of delivering to the pupil, in vocabulary or notes, ready-made renderings for all of Virgil's phrases is not wholly justifiable, to say the least, since from such renderings the pupil gets but partial truth after all, and is furthermore relieved of all necessity of individual thinking and robbed of the stimulus to genuine literary appreciation which would be the result of such individual thought.

It may perhaps be objected that what I am urging is too difficult for the average pupil. Personal experience had in actual teaching

<sup>1</sup> Cf. especially T. R. Glover, *Studies in Virgil*, pp. 47, 48, and Haigh, *The Tragic Drama of the Greeks*, p. 164: "Above all he [Sophocles] closely resembles Virgil in the half-veiled allusiveness of his style. He chooses some skilful combination of words, which, beyond its obvious significance, calls to mind yet other combinations, and opens out new vistas of thought. Various fancies and recollections appear to hover round the lines, suggested by the subtlety of the terms employed; and the language, in such cases, becomes alive with meaning, like an atmosphere quivering with diverse-coloured lights."

in preparatory schools goes to disprove this contention. I am glad to find that my view here is shared by others. Professor Miller, in the preface to his edition of selections from Ovid, remarks that "young students often have a clearer insight and a larger appreciation than is usually credited to them." Professor Miller was, indeed, thinking of the pupil's power to appreciate the thought of Ovid and the illustration of that thought by modern uses of the same materials; what he says holds true, however, I am convinced, in the sphere of word and phrase analysis.

Virgil's language is in large measure, also, even against his will, the result of another force, "the shackles of the meter."<sup>1</sup> Increasing attention has lately been paid in various editions of Latin hexameter poets to the hampering effects of the metrical form, and to the means taken by the poets to escape its incubus. This has been done most strikingly, perhaps, in Norden's large edition of *Æneid* VI;<sup>2</sup> the book should be read and studied for this if for nothing else. Phraseology, syntax, word-order, nay, the very thought itself, were all alike affected by the meter.

On this matter it is needless, however, to dwell further. I wish rather to remark that it is our duty to bring out some of the facts pertinent here to our students. This task is easy of accomplishment;

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Professor Johnston's paper, "The Teaching of Virgil in High Schools."

<sup>2</sup> By Eduard Norden (Leipzig, Teubner: 1903. For a review of the book see *Classical Review*, 1904, pp. 403-7). This whole matter has seldom, if ever, been better put than it was by Conington, in a paper on "Early Roman Tragedy and Epic Poetry," printed originally in the *North British Review*, No. LXXXII, and included later in his *Miscellaneous Writings*, Vol. I, pp. 294-347; cf. p. 333: "Superficial observers are apt to treat the influence of metre with comparative indifference, as involving the mere outward form of poetry; but a more careful analysis will show that though the soul of verse is doubtless originally separable from its body, the latter is not a bare husk, to be assumed or thrown off at pleasure, but a part of an organized whole, modified and modifying in turn, and clinging to its partner with a tenacious vitality, which criticism, in attempting to disentangle, is apt to destroy. The language reacts on the thought, which, in taking shape, is obliged to part with something of its own, and accept something extraneous and accidental; and the metre exercises a similar constraint on the language, enforcing the substitution of one word for another, and thus producing a still further departure from the precise character of the conception originally formed by the mind. This second bondage makes itself felt much more in ancient than in modern metres, in proportion as the rule of quantity is more searchingly oppressive than the rule of accent." See also Myers, *Essays Classical*, pp. 135-39.

if we discharge it well, we shall inevitably deepen the respect and admiration of our pupils for Virgil, by giving them some conception of the difficulties which Virgil met and overcame. Further, a teacher might compare some of the best as well as some of the worst verses in Ennius with good and bad verses in the *Æneid*, and thereby make even the dullest of his pupils realize the gap between the hexameters that mark the beginnings and those that mark the culmination of that type of poetic form among the Romans. He might compare verses of Catullus and Lucretius, too, with verses of Virgil, to show what advances Virgil made over his immediate predecessors; and lastly, by setting Virgil's verses side by side with those of Lucan, Ovid, or even Juvenal, he might show how incapable anyone else was, even with Virgil before him as a model, to duplicate Virgil's achievement.<sup>†</sup> All this is in reality comparatively simple work, not involving understanding of the subject-matter of the authors referred to, and likely to stimulate understanding and appreciation of metrical form. Further, as hinted above, this study of the metrical form of the *Æneid* will lead to juster apprehension and appreciation of Virgil himself. It is true that he loved, for its own sake, intricate and unusual turns of expression; it is also true that much that strikes one, at least at first, as disagreeable in the language of Virgil was forced on him by conditions which, with all his marvelous skill, he was not able to overcome entirely. To make a pupil realize, first, how ill-adapted the Latin language was, naturally to the hexameter, to give him some conception of the history of this form of verse among the Romans, to make him realize, even if but faintly, how much Virgil achieved in his hexameters, must waken in him admiration for Virgil's powers as a poet.

For my own part, therefore, I decline to think of a literary study of the Roman poets apart from a philological study of them. Nay, I believe rather that it is just because our students are so lamentably weak on the philological side that they do not appreciate, as they might, Latin poetry. Our students come to the study of Virgil and Horace with but imperfect knowledge of the normal forms of inflection; they have a still more halting knowledge of Latin syntax.

<sup>†</sup> I may refer here to the edition of Lucan by Messrs. Haskins and Heitland, pp. xciv-c, especially p. xcvi.

Their control of vocabulary is largely, if not wholly, conspicuous by its absence. So long as such conditions obtain, so long will it be necessary to carry into our teaching of the poets elementary drill in vocabulary, forms, and syntax. But, even if our students were thoroughly drilled in the normal in forms and syntax, much hard work in such matters philological would yet be necessary. The poets, especially Virgil, present to the student forms he has not met before; the departures from the norms of syntax are even more striking.<sup>1</sup>

I must now say certain things to prevent misunderstanding of my position as suggested above. The study of which I have spoken at such length is not to be pursued for its own sake merely, but rather as a means to an end; that end is the understanding and appreciation and enjoyment of the *Æneid* as a whole. The difficulty with the "philological" study of the classics is that it tends to regard such study as an end in itself. There is a real, but not an inevitable or insuperable danger here. The mastery of the details discussed above is essential to an understanding of the poem; as has already been said, the better one's knowledge of such things is, the better is he equipped to appreciate, if only he will press on to such appreciation.

What should our pupils carry with them into college from their study of the *Æneid*? First, a knowledge of the details of vocabulary, form, syntax, meter, on which I have dwelt so long, perhaps too long, already. Secondly, a knowledge of the contents of the poem, or at least of such portions of it as they have read. It is astonishing how many college students possess little or no faculty of recalling, in any connected way, the subject-matter of the Greek or Latin authors that are within their reading. Lack of practice

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Conington, *Miscellaneous Writings*, Vol. I, p. 220: "The way to study Latin literature is to study the authors who gave it its characters: the way to study those authors is to study them individually in their individual works, and to study each work, as far as may be, in its minutest details. For other purposes, we may be satisfied with a general view of an author's mind, or with a cursory perusal of some one or more of his writings; but the peculiar training which is sought from the study of literature is only to be obtained, in anything like its true fulness, by attending, not merely to each paragraph or each sentence, but to each word; not merely to the general force of an expression, but to the various constituents which make up the effect produced by it on a thoroughly intelligent reader." Conington had the scholar in mind, but, when proper deductions shall have been made, his remarks will apply to all students of the classics.

in such work is, probably, largely the cause of the lack of power to do it. As a detail of this knowledge of the contents of the *Æneid*, they should have a comprehension of the great parts into which it falls, and of their relation to one another.

Thirdly, our students should carry with them a knowledge of the real purpose of the *Æneid* and of the way in which that purpose is achieved. What relation do various parts of the work bear to the underlying theme? Whence came the story of Æneas? When and how did the Romans come to believe in this story? Why did Virgil give to this story a prominence denied to it by Ennius? Or, in other words, why did Virgil select it as the means by which to achieve his underlying purpose? In this connection the teacher has an admirable opportunity to draw for all time for his pupils the distinction between mere translation and real interpretation—a distinction so vital to the apprehension and appreciation of poetry.

Fourthly, I am inclined to believe that something can be done also to make our pupils gain some appreciation of the sources of the *Æneid* and of the methods by which Virgil made use of his materials. I am aware that many students' total unacquaintance with Greek, and all students' imperfect mastery of Latin and their necessarily limited outlook upon the field of classical literature present great difficulties here; but something at least can be done. To take but one case: There is possibility of showing to intelligent pupils the skill with which Virgil has worked out the Palinurus episode in Book VI; how he has utilized materials got from one passage in the *Iliad* and two passages in the *Odyssey*, combined with matter obtained from local traditions current both in Etruria and Lucania, and yet has put the whole together so skilfully that the ordinary reader does not detect the sutures, beside producing a passage which, though like in details to various other things, is itself in reality a new creation. Work of this sort will go far to prevent, or at least to correct, erroneous ideas on the student's part, by throwing important light on the question of Virgil's originality; for it will help him, first of all, to understand aright the attitude of the Roman literary world to the whole question of the use of the materials gathered by literary predecessors; and, secondly, it will show how independent, after all, is the Virgilian product, even



when the materials are wholly or almost entirely borrowed from earlier works.

It may be objected that I am utterly impractical and visionary in my presentation of the aims which teachers and students should set before themselves. So far, however, as the teacher is concerned, I am certainly not demanding too much. Indeed, I fail to see how the teacher who desires to make the most of himself can, in bare justice to himself, be content with less than I have suggested. So far as the teaching of our pupils is concerned, I might reply simply in terms of the platitude that, since we inevitably come far short of our ideals, it makes for respectable achievement to set those ideals as high as possible. I shall rather say, however, that experience shows that much of this work can be done. Again, the adoption of the point of view I have suggested will do something to correct what seems to me a lamentable tendency in educational matters, at least in matters Latin. I refer to the tendency to take every possible precaution that the student shall never have to do a hard or disagreeable thing in all his study of the classics, to smooth the road before his feet, and to shield him from every blustering wind. It is curious that, side by side with the increasing attention paid to physical training, there should be this tendency to forget that intellectual powers, too, may be weakened by disuse, just as they are strengthened by use, and that intellectual coddling and pampering will not produce vigorous and virile mentality.

So far I have spoken of things which, it seems to me, are vital in the literary study of Latin poetry. I pass now to consider whether the presentation in textbook or classroom of passages from modern literatures ("parallel passages," so called) contributes to the literary appreciation of the classics.

I will not go so far as to say that it does not help at all, but I do assert vigorously that its value is commonly vastly overrated. My general position is this: No "parallel passage" or cross-reference is of real, definite value to a student unless the passage which is to be used as illustrative material is itself reasonably familiar to him, so much so that he can at once picture to himself the setting in which it occurs, and can at once recall definitely and clearly its exact meaning.

Let us take a concrete example, from the sphere of syntax. In

*Æneid*, I, 4, the pupil meets a strange form, *superum*. Obviously he cannot interpret this verse until he knows the exact nature of this form. Is it wise, then, to ask the pupil to compare this passage with half a dozen others in later books, each of which he is equally unable to interpret until he understands this form of the genitive plural, and to require him to induce from them a rule which he shall apply to the interpretation of the passage with which he is primarily concerned? Is this to help a pupil? This, you may say, is an extreme case. Yet, repeatedly in our editions of classic authors the notes are packed with references to classical passages which the pupil has never read and is never likely to read. Often such "parallels" are the only help given. Of what value will such passages be? We have already confessed that our student comes to the study of poetry but ill equipped; yet we virtually ask him, as he is laboring to understand a given text, to add to the burdens which that task is imposing upon him by reading all sorts of bits in all sorts of styles, though he has not the faintest conception of the setting of these passages. Is it any wonder that our students cultivate the habit of skipping all the parallel passages cited in their notes?

It may be said that the case is different with citations from English authors. This I deny. Is all English poetry absolutely transparent, so that isolated bits of the poets, dislocated entirely from their context, will speak instantaneously in the same tones and terms, to all minds? The teachers of English do not think so, if one may judge from the annotations in their editions of the English classics. Are our students in the preparatory schools, or even those in the colleges, well versed in knowledge of English literature? Test the matter by citing passages from the better-known poets, and note how few faces will light up with recollection of the contents or language of the passage adduced as a parallel. I repeat that to be truly illustrative a passage must have body and content by which to appeal to the pupil's memory and imagination.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It is the fashion among opponents of classical education to argue that the time now spent in the study of Greek and Latin could be used to better advantage in the study of other things, especially of English. Until I see more signs than I have heretofore noted that the teaching of English has thus far been markedly successful, either in enabling the pupil to write English well or in enlarging his knowledge of English literature, especially poetry, I shall combat this contention with might and main.

I have other difficulties in this connection. It takes space in the printed book, it takes time in the classroom, to bring these parallels before our pupils. Necessarily something must be sacrificed to find time or space for them; that something will inevitably be the very things on which I have laid such stress above as being indispensable.

Again, to rely much on modern parallels in editing or teaching the *Æneid* or any other ancient work, is to proceed in unscientific fashion, by encouraging the pupil in the habit to which he is naturally only too prone, that of getting at the meaning and spirit of his original through a translation or parallel in some other language, rather than through contact with the original itself.

But I have another and, to me, far more serious difficulty, in the fact that in countless instances the supposed parallel from modern literature is not a parallel at all, because it differs fundamentally in spirit from the Latin or Greek passage it is supposed to illustrate, so much so that such a supposed parallel, instead of helping a student to understand his original, may in reality interpose a grievous obstacle between him and his apprehension and appreciation of the original.

Let me put my point in an extreme illustration. Suppose we had an edition of Homer which should consist wholly of illustrative parallels from Apollonius Rhodius and Virgil; would that edition give a proper interpretation of Homer? Surely not, even if the one purpose of Apollonius and of Virgil had been to reproduce Homer with the utmost faithfulness. How much less true would the interpretation thus gained be in view of the fact that both Apollonius and Virgil sought, as it has been maintained, to imitate Homer, yes, but as rivals, seeking to suggest to their contemporaries contrast rather than comparison with the father of Greek poetry!<sup>1</sup> In many instances modern passages are equally misleading. Even the best translation fails to reproduce exactly or fully the original; much more will paraphrase and hazy or mistaken reminiscence and imitation come short of such reproduction.

Let us take an example. In *Æneid*, I, 159-69, there is a description of a harbor, as follows:

<sup>1</sup> For Virgil cf. Conington's edition, Vol. II, p. xliv. For Apollonius Rhodius see Professor Robinson Ellis, cited in Mr. Way's translation of Apollonius ("Temple Classics"), p. 208.

Est in secessu longo locus : insula portum  
 efficit obiectu laterum, quibus omnis ab alto  
 frangitur inque sinus scindit sese unda reductos.  
 Hinc atque hinc vastae rupes geminique minantur  
 in caelum scopuli quorum sub vertice late  
 aequora tuta silent; tum silvis scaena coruscis  
 desuper horrentique atrum nemus imminet umbra.  
 Fronte sub adversa scopulis pendentibus antrum,  
 intus aquae dulces vivoque sedilia saxo,  
 nympharum domus. Hic fessas non vincula navis  
 ulla tenent, unco non alligat ancora morsu.

No one of **us** need feel ashamed to admit that this passage gives him difficulty still, no matter how many times he has read and pondered it and the notes in all the editions he has at hand. Yet let us suppose that teacher or editor says little or nothing concerning the meaning of *secessu*, 159 (and the way in which the word gets that meaning), or of *sinus . . . reductos*, 161, or of *silvis scaena coruscis*, 164, or of *horrenti . . . umbra*, 165, or of *scopulis pendentibus*, 166; let us suppose that he contents himself with citing passages like the following:

A port there is in Ithaca, the haunt  
 Of Phorcys, Ancient of the Sea. Steep shores  
 Stretch inward toward each other, and roll back  
 The mighty surges which the hoarse winds hurl  
 Against them from the ocean, while within  
 Ships ride without their hawsers, when they once  
 Have passed the haven's mouth. An olive tree  
 With spreading branches at the farther end  
 Of that fair haven stands, and overbrows  
 A pleasant shady grotto of the Nymphs.

—*Odyssey*, XIII, 117-26.

And overhead grew  
 Insuperable height of loftiest shade,  
 Cedar, and pine, and fir, and branching palm,  
 A sylvan scene, and, as the ranks ascend  
 Shade above shade, a woody theatre  
 Of stateliest view.

—*Paradise Lost*, IV, 137-42.

Far to the right, where Apennine ascends,  
 Bright as the summer, Italy extends:  
 Its uplands sloping deck the mountain's side,  
 Woods over woods in gay theatric pride.

—Goldsmith, *Traveller*, 105-8.

Does any one of these three passages come within measurable distance even of Virgil's picture? Does this passage from Spenser<sup>1</sup> give, as has been asserted, "substantially the same picture" as that portrayed by Virgil?

And now they nigh approched to the sted  
Whereas those Mermayds dwelt. It was a still  
And calmy bay, on the one side sheltered  
With the brode shadow of an hoarie hill;  
On th' other side an high rocke toured still,  
That twixt them both a pleasaunt port they made,  
And did like an half theatre fulfill.

Does even the following passage, closely as it follows Virgil in its general outlines, give an exact reproduction of its original?

In one they find a lone sequestered place  
Where, to a crescent curved, the shore extends  
Two moony horns, that in their sweep embrace  
A spacious bay—a rock the port defends;  
Inward it fronts, and broad to ocean bends  
Its back, whereon each dashing billow dies,  
When the wind rises and the storm descends;  
While here and there two lofty crags arise,  
Whose towers, far out at sea, salute the sailor's eyes.  
Safe sleep the silent seas beneath; above,  
Black arching woods o'ershade the circled scene:  
Within a grotto opens in the grove,  
Pleasant with flowers, with moss, with ivies green,  
And waters warbling in the depths unseen;  
Needed nor twisted rope nor anchor there  
For weary ships; into that so serene  
And sheltered hermitage, the maiden fair  
Entered, her slender sails unfurling from the air.

—Tasso, *Ger. Lib.*, XV, 42, 43.

Of these passages not one is an exact counterpart of the Virgilian passage which it is the prime business of the student at the moment to understand. Some, indeed, introduce conceptions quite foreign to the picture drawn by Virgil. Will such passages enable the student to reach a clear apprehension and a right enjoyment of the Vergilian passage? Will they not rather confuse him and add to the difficulties of his task, already severe enough? Do such passages

<sup>1</sup>*Faërie Queene*, II, 12, 30.

illustrate (i. e., illuminate) Virgil, or do they simply decorate the commentary?

Certain things written five years ago by Professor Postgate, the distinguished English scholar, set forth so admirably what I have been trying to say that I cannot refrain from quoting them here:<sup>1</sup>

And here I must pause to touch upon a very subtle danger which the free use of modern parallels involves. A quotation from a modern writer brings home to the reader's mind the thought which the citer desires to suggest with a force and vividness that no ancient quotation can match. Such an appeal is apt to sweep reason from her feet, while the mind forgets that the modern may have misunderstood or misrepresented the ancient and that at any rate he is a modern after all.

Professor Postgate then reminds us, by way of illustration, that though Jugurtha, when thrust into the Carcer Tullianum, exclaimed, "Jove, how cold your bath is,"<sup>2</sup> Longfellow, in a poem on Jugurtha, makes the exclamation run, "How cold are thy baths, Apollo!" Professor Postgate then proceeds:

If the poetic mind works so freely with a plain narrative of fact, how watchful must we be of comparisons which suggest that it will render faithfully an ancient conception from the nebulous regions of sentiment and fancy? Few poets have had a finer knowledge of the ancient poets than Tennyson. He sings of an "island-valley" with "bowery hollows *crowned* with summer seas," just as Homer had sung of an island, τὴν πέρι πόρτος ἀπέριτος ἐστεφάνωται.<sup>3</sup> The resemblance is obvious: and the difference. We may hope that, if Tennyson had been translating the *Odyssey*, he would have avoided a word which carries an idea of "surmounting" absent from the Homeric verb.<sup>4</sup>

In writing these words, Professor Postgate had in mind, not young pupils, but scholars, men presumably well versed in the ancient and the modern classics, capable of interpreting each by themselves, and of comparing or contrasting them in such wise as to apprehend their fundamental and inner agreement or disagreement of thought and spirit. The danger to which he refers undeniably exists for the scholar; how much more does it exist for the young pupil who has no firm grasp as yet on either the ancient or the modern literatures!

<sup>1</sup> See the *Classical Review*, Vol. XIV, pp. 230, 231.

<sup>2</sup> So Professor Postgate, though he cites Plutarch, *Marius*, 12, as giving Ἡράκλεις, εἶπεν, ὥς ψυχρὸν ὑμῶν τὸ βαλανεῖον!

<sup>3</sup> We may render, "round which a limitless sea is set garland-wise."

<sup>4</sup> Yet Butcher and Lang translate, "I saw the island crowned about with the circle of the endless sea."

This whole matter may be illustrated equally well within the sphere of the classics themselves. Many of the passages cited from other authors to illustrate, let us say Horace or Virgil, are in reality in no sense strictly applicable. Later poets at times reproduce their words with much fidelity; yet these reproduced words often appear in radically different settings and are employed by the later poet with a widely different intention. I shall have time to consider but two examples.

In *Carmina*, iii, 30, 1-2, Horace says:

Exegi monumentum aere perennius  
regalique situ pyramidum altius, etc.

Now, manifestly Horace's thought is that of the durability of the *monumentum* he has erected; he must mean to say: "I have reared a monument more lasting even than the things that to the world are types of indestructibility." In two passages Martial has more or less consciously in mind these words of Horace (though his recollection of them is deeply affected by his remembrance of Ovid's imitation of them in *Met.*, XV, 871 ff.). In VIII, 3, 5-8, Martial cries:

Et cum rupta situ Messalae saxa iacebunt  
altaque cum Licini marmora pulvis erunt,  
me tamen ora legent et secum plurimus hospes  
ad patrias sedes carmina nostra feret.

In X, 2, 9-12, Martial says:

Marmora Messalae findit caprificus et audax  
dimidios Crispi mulio ridet equos:  
at chartis nec furta nocent et saecula prosunt,  
solaque non norunt haec monumenta mori.

Both poets are expressing essentially the same idea; they are using different means, however, to express it. Yet more than one modern editor has asserted that Martial, VIII, 3, 5, of itself shows that *situ* in Horace means "decomposition," "decay," or the like.<sup>1</sup>

In *Aeneid*, VI, 426, Virgil begins his description of the neutral region that lies between Acheron and Elysium-Tartarus. He says:

Continuo auditae voces vagitus et ingens  
infantumque animae flentes in limine primo  
quos dulcis vitae exsortis et ab ubere raptos  
abstulit atra dies et funere mersit acerbo.

<sup>1</sup> So, e. g., Professor Smith renders *regali situ pyramidum* by "the crumbling magnificence of kings."

For centuries critics have differed concerning the interpretation of *in limine primo* in vs. 427. Norden, following La Cerda, argues that a passage in Lucan (II, 106 ff.) is proof positive that we must join this phrase with what follows. Let us look for a moment at what Lucan really says. From vs. 98 he has been describing the excesses committed by Marius. High and low, says Lucan, have perished at his hands, slain even in temples.

Nulli sua profuit aetas.

Non senis extremum piguit vergentibus annis  
praecipitasse diem nec primo in limine vitae  
infantis miseri nascentia rumpere fata.

(None found profit in his years. Though one was old, at his life's end, though his years were speeding to the grave, Marius felt no remorse in bringing them to a yet speedier end, nor did he shrink from breaking the hapless infant's thread of destiny at its very birth.)

Does this passage prove how we must interpret Virgil? Nay, does it throw any light at all on Virgil's language? Is there, indeed, anything here that naturally leads one to connect this passage at all with Virgil? Or, assuming that there is, is the connection between Lucan and Virgil close enough to warrant one in overlooking the fact that to join *in limine primo* with what follows is to do violence to word-order and rhythm, and to introduce an instance of the overloading of the relative *quos* in a manner which would be, I think, without a parallel in Virgil?<sup>1</sup>

So far my attitude toward the use of so-called parallels, especially from modern literatures, has been in the main a negative attitude. It goes without saying, however, that I believe that there is a use, as well as an abuse, of such parallels. The first business of editor

<sup>1</sup> Though I am not primarily concerned with the interpretation *per se* of this passage, I add one remark here: if we join *in primo limine* to what precedes, we make Virgil take pains here, as he does in so many other places in Book VI, to mark the passage of time and Æneas' progress through the underworld (cf. e. g., 273, 477, 540; 255, 535-539, 898). Norden's view, that *vita* is to be taken ἀπὸ κοινοῦ with *in limine primo* and *exsortis* is harsh, and does great violence to the order of words. Even passages like those cited by Norden from Buecheler's *Carmina Epigraphica* (e. g., *rapuit quam mors in limine vitae*, 567, 4, *vitaeeque e limine raptus*, 569, 3) are to me not decisive for Norden's view. Are these not merely interpretations of Virgil, assuming that they are due to his verses here? As interpretations are they *per se* more valuable than the interpretations of editor or critic? Can they outweigh all considerations of word-order, syntax, and style?



or teacher is to give to his readers or pupils the means of understanding the work which is actually before them, and of understanding it in its original dress. Everything which will minister to this end may be legitimately employed. Among the things perfectly in order are appeals to the pupil's own knowledge. The best commentary on Virgil or Horace is Virgil or Horace himself; hence it is wise to encourage the student to illustrate the passage he is reading today by an appeal to passages he read yesterday, the day before, last week, last month. It is fair to expect—nay, to demand—that the pupil shall carry along with him a reasonable amount of knowledge of the portions of Virgil already studied. We cannot exert ourselves too much to develop in our students the power of understanding what they read and of carrying along with them into all their future work a knowledge, not only of the contents of the books they have already studied, but also of the means by which those contents found expression. Hence, it is impossible for the teacher of the *Æneid* to accumulate too many references to passages which the pupil has already seen and read, and to some extent at least understood and appropriated to himself as part of his permanent intellectual equipment. A pupil of the right sort, if he uses but a small part of such references, will insensibly but surely add greatly to his store of information, will deepen and strengthen his understanding and his appreciation of what he is reading, and will be gaining, along the line of least resistance, a knowledge of scientific methods of studying literature, ancient or modern.

First, then, we should use parallels, real parallels, from the classic authors; pedagogical considerations demand that these shall be from the circle of the pupil's own reading, or at least shall be passages which are in themselves, divested of their setting, intelligible. Similar principles will apply—though not so rigorously, of course—to the parallels adduced from modern literatures. Every care should be taken to make the passages adduced really parallel. Otherwise such citations are in the nature of decoration rather than of illustration.

Lastly, a clear general presentation of the extent to which an author like Virgil, Horace, or Ovid has influenced modern literature is, to my mind, far better for the pupil than the perusal of a long

array of bits from a multitude of authors of various periods. To take the first example that occurs to me: A boy would get a far better idea of the part Horace once played in the thinking of cultured Englishmen from reading the tenth chapter of *Roderick Random*, with proper comments by his teacher, or by noting the rôle that Horace plays, in direct quotation and indirect paraphrase and reminiscence alike, in the pages of Thackeray, than from reading a long array of citations, of isolated passages shorn of all context, of the setting that gives them life and value, on individual parts of Horace's writings.